

Appl. No. : **Unknown**
Filed : **Herewith**

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

- 1-20. (Canceled).
21. (New) A compound preparation method characterized by the steps of:
cooling the compound to increase its rigidity, and
mechanically processing the compound to render the compound into a plurality of particles or components of substantially the same size.
22. (New) A compound preparation method as claimed in claim 21, further characterized by the additional subsequent step of:
subjecting the rendered compound to an analysis and/or reaction process.
23. (New) A compound preparation method as claimed in claim 22, wherein the compound is prepared prior to an analysis process used to investigate the compound's constituent components.
24. (New) A compound preparation method as claimed in claim 23 wherein the compound is analyzed using a near infra-red spectrophotometer.
25. (New) A compound preparation method as claimed in claim 21 wherein the compound is cooled using a cooling agent.
26. (New) A compound preparation method as claimed in claim 25 wherein the compound is immersed in the cooling agent to cool the compound and increase the compound's rigidity.
27. (New) A compound preparation method as claimed in claim 21 wherein the compound is cooled using liquid carbon dioxide.
28. (New) A compound preparation method as claimed in claim 21 wherein mechanical processing of the compound homogenizes the compound.
29. (New) A compound preparation method as claimed in claim 21 wherein the mechanical processing of the compound renders the compound into a plurality of distinct particles of substantially the same size.
30. (New) A compound preparation method as claimed in claim 21 wherein the compound is mechanically processed using at least one rotating blade.
31. (New) A compound preparation method as claimed in claim 21 wherein the compound is an organic compound.

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32. (New) A compound preparation method as claimed in claim 31 wherein the compound is formed from or includes plant tissue.

33. (New) A compound preparation apparatus which includes a cooling means adapted to cool the compound to increase the compound's rigidity, and a mechanical processing means adapted to mechanically process the compound to render the compound into a plurality of components of substantially the same size.

34. (New) A compound preparation apparatus as claimed in claim 33 wherein the cooling means is adapted to supply a cooling agent to cool the compound and increase the compound's rigidity.

35. (New) A compound preparation apparatus as claimed in claim 34 wherein the cooling means includes a source of liquefied carbon dioxide.

36. (New) A compound preparation apparatus as claimed in claim 33 wherein the mechanical processing means includes at least one blade adapted to rotate to mechanically process a compound.

37. (New) A compound preparation apparatus as claimed in claim 33 which includes a flushing means adapted to flush gas from within the mechanical processing means.

38. (New) A compound preparation apparatus as claimed in claim 37 wherein the flushing means includes at least one fan and/or heating element combination.